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*Irish Mission to UN,
New York.*

August 28th, 1969

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CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Assistant Secretary:

As promised on the telephone this morning I am sending you a Note covering the Minister's conversations last week with the Secretary-General. This Note is, I think, comprehensive as regards all important points. The Minister may, however, wish to see whether something of consequence is omitted, and he may naturally also have amendments to the text as submitted.

2. As regards paragraph 12 of the Note (authority for the despatch by the Secretary-General of a special representative), I should say that I would regard it as highly improbable that the Secretary-General would send one on his own initiative unless the British were fully agreeable to that step; and there are no indications that this is so at the moment.

3. Incidentally, I wonder whether the Secretary-General made a mistake (or I misheard) when he spoke of Ambassador Ribbing having been sent as a personal representative of his to Cambodia-Thailand. The records I have so far been able to turn up indicate that the man concerned (likewise a Swede) was Gussing who was sent by agreement between the two countries, who agreed to share all costs of the mission. As regards the despatch to Equatorial Guinea of a special representative (instead of a U.N. peace-keeping force, which had been requested by Equatorial Guinea),

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See our report of 24th March, which mentions the representations made by Hungary to the effect that the Secretary-General was, more or less, usurping the functions of the Security Council.

4. You will note that the Secretary-General at all stages felt that our best hope of securing a U.N. presence rests in the field of human rights. In this connection you will recall that, shortly after the first interview, the Minister asked me to have three points conveyed to the Government, which were, as I recall, communicated to you by Paddy Power on the phone around noon that day (18th) viz. that:

- (i) after extensive lobbying, he felt we would secure inscription;
- (ii) we would not get a peace-keeping force, and
- (iii) if the Minister had authority to move on to civil rights and seek a UN presence on that basis, we might make some progress.

It was, I think, the following day that Denis Holmes told me that the Taoiseach agreed that, if the Minister felt he should fall back on the human-rights aspect, he could do so.

5. I may add that, when I was talking to Stavropoulos on Tuesday (26th), he - and he is Legal Counsel as well as now Under Secretary-General for Assembly Affairs - was strongly of the opinion that human rights is by far the best field to explore; and Ralph Bunche, when I saw him yesterday, was of the same opinion. Stavropoulos, and to a lesser extent Bunche, expressed a poor opinion of our item (on the human-rights aspect) being considered by the Third Committee; and Bunche thought that it would be much better to have it in the Special Political Committee and that the fact that Apartheid^{which}, like our own case (on human rights), has a high political content and is taken in the Special Committee could constitute an argument for the item ~~is~~ going there.

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6. I regret that the full report on events here last week is not ready, I shall do my best to get it over early but it will not, I think, contain anything of much importance of which you are not already aware, and the Minister is of course familiar with all the salient points.

Yours sincerely,

C. C. Cremin

Mr. Sean G. Ronan
Assistant Secretary
Department of External Affairs
Dublin

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P.S. In connection with paragraph 2 of the enclosed Note concerning Mr. Lester Pearson, it was very interesting to read the statement in paragraph 6 of Ambassador Warnock's report of 18th August, of which a copy has just reached us.

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SITUATION IN THE SIX COUNTIES BEFORE SECURITY COUNCIL:
Talks with Secretary-General before Security Council

The Minister had, in all, three appointments with the Secretary-General: 11a.m., Monday, 18th August; 5:30p.m., Tuesday, 19th August; and 10:30a.m., Thursday, 21st August. Each conversation lasted about twenty minutes.

2. At the first meeting, the Secretary-General, having welcomed the Minister, said that he had been very preoccupied about the situation in the North and had kept it constantly in mind since Mr. Aiken's visit of 23rd April. He had, he went on, been giving particular attention to the possibility, to which Mr. Aiken had then alluded [paras. (4) and (5) of our note of 25th April, 1969], of having a United Nations Observer, i.e. a personal representative of the Secretary-General, sent there. When a few days later he was in London, he raised the matter with Mr. Michael Stewart, British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Relations. Mr. Stewart was opposed to the despatch of a personal representative of the Secretary-General or any such UN presence. However, in Rome some days later the Secretary-General took advantage of a conversation with Mr. Robert McNamara, former United States Defence Secretary and since last summer President of the IBRD. He discussed with Mr. McNamara the possibility of his (McNamara) releasing for such a mission Mr. Lester Pearson, former Canadian Prime Minister, who is presiding over a group established by Mr. McNamara to investigate the problems of investment for developing countries. In U Thant's view, Mr. Pearson, a former President of the Assembly, would be an extremely

good choice. Mr. McNamara seemed sympathetic. U Thant remarked in this connection that he did not know whether Mr. McNamara is a Catholic (my impression is that he is not).

3. Since then, the Secretary-General had been giving further consideration to the question of a personal representative and a suitable nominee. Recently he had thought also of Dr. Ralph Bunche, Under-Secretary-General. Dr. Bunche would, U Thant feels, be quite excellent as he has a very deep commitment to civil rights and has been very active in that field in the United States. However, that very fact might make him unacceptable to the British, whose approval of both the principle and the nominee would be necessary.

4. The Secretary-General then said that, in his view, there would be a much better prospect of having a personal representative appointed than of obtaining a peace-keeping force, especially as the creation of such a force is something about which some Members of the Council, and in particular the USSR and France, have strong reservations of principle. He thought we had the requisite number of votes for inscription of our request on the agenda of the Council. It would, however, be more prudent to concentrate on the human-rights aspect. He recognised that, if the item were inscribed, the Minister would have no option but to make a speech reflecting the content of our letter seeking a peace-keeping force. When, as was most probable, this request would fail, one might then move on to another formula, and more particularly to that of a personal representative of the Secretary-General.

5. The Secretary-General's idea was that, the item having been placed on the agenda, (i) the Council would hold one or more meetings; (ii) at a given point, the request for a peace-keeping force would be

rejected, and (iii) there would then be informal consultations on how the debate should be continued and concluded. In the course of such consultations, a suggestion for another kind of UN presence - specifically a personal representative of the Secretary-General - would emerge, the Secretary-General playing some role in promoting the suggestion; and, if the trend of the consultations were favourable, a proposal to that effect would be submitted to the Council by one of the members (not designated).

6. The Minister expressed appreciation of the active interest being taken by the Secretary-General in the matter and implied that a sequence of the kind proposed by U Thant, and a conclusion of the kind envisaged to the Council deliberations, might be welcomed by the Government.

7. The Secretary-General then raised the question whether he should inform the British of the proposal he had outlined to the Minister. He thought that it might be better not to do so at that stage; and the Minister agreed, having regard also to the desirability of apprising the Government.

8. Finally, the Minister enquired what should be said to the Press about the conversation, mentioning that he was due to appear before an UNCA Conference later in the morning. The Secretary-General said that OPI (UN Press Office) would indicate that he (the S.G.) had had a useful exchange of views with the Minister and that this exchange of views covered the question of a United Nations involvement in the North. He wondered, however, whether the latter phrase might not go too far. It was finally agreed that both the Minister and the Secretary-General should say (mutatis mutandis) that they:

- (1) had had a useful exchange of views;
- (2) had discussed the possibility of the UN

contributing towards the easing of the situation in Northern Ireland, and

- (3) intended to continue their discussions during the Minister's presence in New York.

In dealing with questions at the Press Conference, the Minister adhered to this formulation, as did OPI at the daily press briefing.

9. The Minister sought a second meeting at approximately 4:30p.m. on the Tuesday (19th), in the light of his assessment of the outlook as of then, and it took place at 5:30p.m.. The Minister explained that it now seemed that the item would ^{not} be inscribed on the agenda and the question therefore arose of what should in that case be done. The Secretary-General agreed with the Minister's assessment and again reiterated his view that the best possible hope of a UN presence would be to have a personal representative of his sent to the area. He went on to say that, by a coincidence, there was now, in his estimate, another possible candidate for the role of personal representative viz. Mr. Earl Warren, Chief Justice of the USA for fourteen years until some weeks ago. At a lunch on the previous day (after his conversation with the Minister), the Secretary-General had had a message from Earl Warren that his services would be at the disposal of the Secretary-General, if required; and U Thant thought that Earl Warren would be a good representative for our purpose and should be acceptable to both sides. Otherwise, nothing of special note emerged at this (second) interview.

10. The third interview was sought by the Minister late in the afternoon of Wednesday (20th August), after the Council meeting, and was fixed for the following morning (10:30a.m.). The Secretary-General,

who had, of course, been present at the Council meeting, was highly complimentary about the Minister's speech, which he described as relevant, moderate in language and marked by a combination of firmness and dignity. The result was, he thought, the best possible. Lord Caradon had, in his view, been quite helpful, and particularly so in not insisting on a vote, which would have shown the Council unwilling to adopt the draft agenda. Lord Caradon's firm instructions had been to insist on a vote but he had deviated from them. For the Secretary-General Lord Caradon's personal dispositions are good but he was naturally subject to the directions of his Government.

11. The Secretary-General went on to repeat that the request for a peace-keeping force would run into difficulties which had nothing to do with the merits of the case. In his opinion, by far the best course would be to concentrate on the civil-rights aspect, and to secure the despatch of a personal representative would mark very good progress.

12. In reply to a question from the Minister as to whether this would require authorisation by the Security Council, U Thant said that the practice varied: the personal representative for the Middle East (Ambassador Jarring) emanated from a Council decision but there were other instances in which he had acted on his own initiative, such as the appointment of Ambassador Ribbing in 1963 to look into a problem between Cambodia-Thailand and his despatch of a representative to Equatorial Guinea last March. By and large, he felt that, given the probable reluctance of Britain to such a step, the despatch of a personal representative to the Six Counties would require U.N. sanction.

13. On a broader plane, the Secretary-General declared that, as far as he personally was concerned, his sympathies were entirely with us, both on general grounds and by reason of his own background. As a youth, he had followed with great interest our struggle for freedom; and, by instinct, he always found himself on the side of the under-dog. He would, he said, continue to follow the situation closely and would propose to state publicly, if occasion required, that his conversations with us, of which this was the third in the series, would continue between himself and the Permanent Representative after the Minister returned to Dublin.

14. In taking leave, the Minister expressed his sincere thanks to the Secretary-General for ~~the~~ readiness with which he had arranged appointments and for the cordiality and friendliness he had shown at their meetings. The Secretary-General assured the Minister that he is at all times prepared to help in every way possible and that he appreciated the opportunity of having these conversations with the Minister. As he ~~had~~ already done earlier, he spoke of his high regard for Ireland and of the dedication shown by the Government, over the years, to the principles and purposes of the United Nations, which had resulted in Ireland playing a greater role at the United Nations than its size might warrant.

C. C. C.
28. VIII. '69

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